



COUNCIL REPORT
Development Services
For the August 13, 2019 Council Meeting

DATE: August 6, 2019 File: 5080-01
TO: Paul Gipps, CAO
FROM: Nancy Henderson, GM of Development Services
RE: June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council consider the public feedback received during the Social Issues Town Hall meeting at a future Committee of the Whole Meeting to discuss housing and social issues as part of the 2020-2022 Strategic Priorities and budget deliberations.

RATIONALE:

On June 18, 2019 Council directed staff to arrange a Town Hall meeting to provide West Kelowna residents and business owners the opportunity to share concerns and possible solutions related to crime, vagrancy, open drug use and other unsavoury behaviour in the downtown core and surrounding neighbourhoods. Council further directed staff to provide a report outlining the comments and suggestions received at the town hall meeting for consideration at a future Council meeting

This report provides a summary of the public feedback received during the Town Hall Meeting held in Westbank Centre on June 27, 2019. It is recommended that these comments be considered as part of the 2020-2022 Strategic Priorities and budget considerations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY OBJECTIVE:

2019 Strategic Priorities

A commitment to action was made through the 2019-2022 strategic plan, which prioritizes support for efforts to address health, homelessness and housing in the community. The following action items have been prioritized in 2019 to accomplish this strategic goal:

- To work with the province and other organizations to improve access to supportive housing, health and social services for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Creation of a Homelessness Strategy for the Westside.
- Advocating for the development of an urgent care centre on the Greater Westside and improvements to community health care services.
- Pursue the development of an Urgent Care Centre in West Kelowna.

The 2019 Strategic Priorities also has a focus on relationships and identified the need to build relationships and to be more collaborative with neighbouring communities. In addition, priorities for 2019 include a focus on community safety and the review of municipal policing levels and lobbying for a review of provincial policing levels, which the province has committed to and is currently underway.

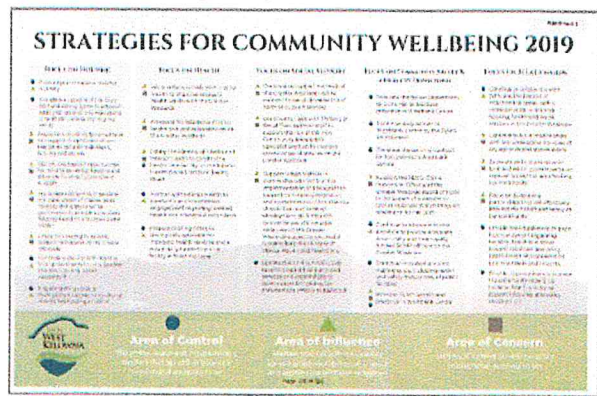
2020- 2022 Priorities

Council has identified priorities for 2020 - 2022 in the 2019 Priorities document, which will be reviewed in detail annually and amended to reflect emerging priorities throughout the term of Council.

- Establishment of an Affordable Housing Strategy, with the intent of providing direction to stakeholders in response to the affordable housing needs of the community.
- Develop a vibrant downtown core that will offer attractions for all West Kelowna residents.

BACKGROUND:

On the evening of June 27, 2019, the City of West Kelowna hosted a public Town Hall in the Westbank Lions Community Centre to gather input and suggestions from the public regarding social issues in West Kelowna’s downtown area and surrounding neighbourhoods. Staff were directed to coordinate the town hall meeting by Council at its Committee of the Whole Meeting on June 18, 2019. Council agreed to provide this opportunity to allow for public input related to concerns with crime, vagrancy, open drug use and other unsavoury behaviour that is negatively impacting the downtown core of Westbank Centre and the surrounding areas. On June 25, 2019, the West Kelowna Strategies for Community Wellbeing 2019 was presented to Council; a summary of the social issue’s initiative was presented by staff during the Town Hall.



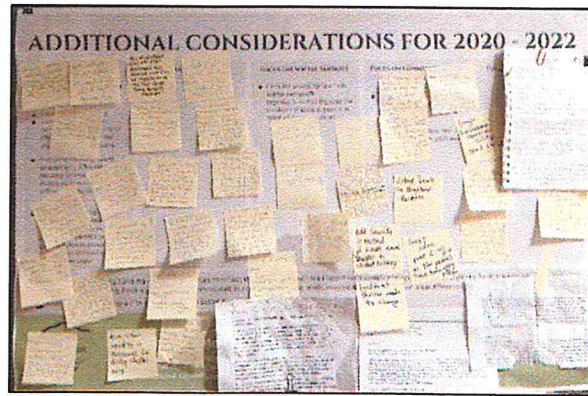
The Town Hall was advertised through press releases, the City of West Kelowna email list server and website. Approximately two hundred people attended the Town Hall. The meeting was facilitated by Allan Nielson of Neilson Strategies. Elected official attending included City of West Kelowna Mayor Gord Milson, Councillors Jason Friesen, Jason Zilke, Stephen Johnson, Doug Findlater and Rick de Jong; Westbank First Nation Councillor Tom Connick and Member of Parliament, Dan Albas. The elected officials and staff’s role at this meeting was to listen and only seek clarification through the facilitator.

The meeting commenced with opening remarks by the facilitator and the Mayor and included presentations by:

- Nancy Henderson, General Manager of Development Services, City of West Kelowna
- Duncan Dixon, Staff Sergeant, West Kelowna RCMP
- Dhorea Ramanula, Manager of Programs, West Kelowna Shelter Society
- Ann Howard, Regional Director, Interior Region Office, BC Housing
- Dr. Silvina Mema, Medical Health Officer for Central Okanagan, Interior Health Authority



A public feedback board was available for written comments from the public and handouts included the City of West Kelowna Strategy for Community Wellbeing 2019; an Overview of the Brown Road Interim Housing Project, prepared by the Westside Shelter Society; and a copy of the Westside Shelter Resource Calendar for June through August. Sign-up sheets were available at the entrance to volunteer with the Westbank Centre Business Watch, Community Partners for a Healthy Community and the West Kelowna Shelter Society. While there was no interest from the attendees to volunteer for the West Kelowna Shelter Society, one individual signed up for the Community Partners for a Health Community and four people signed up for the Westbank Centre Business Watch Program. A sign-up sheet for presenters was provided and each presenter was allowed up to two minutes to speak in order to allow all attendees a chance to present their ideas.



Of the two hundred attendees, thirty-three people spoke and thirty-nine written comments were received. This report is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting, but instead provides a summary of the public comments received during the event. The event was recorded and the full proceedings are available on the City's website under Community Video's on the Webcasts [page](#).

Public Feedback Summary

The public presenters were a mix of residents, business owners, social service providers and two current residents of the Brown Road Interim Housing. A complete summary of the speaker comments and written submissions has been attached this report (*Attachment 1*). The attached written post-in note summary has been organized under four categories: 1) Patrol/Enforcement; 2) Shelter Location; 3) Other Jurisdiction Solutions; and 4) General. Highlights of the comments are provided below.



Summary of Public Feedback:

- Overall residents appreciated the Town Hall format, the need for a regional approach and the the various stakeholders and service providers attending to listen.
- Significant concern was raised about resulting crime from the homeless population; most felt it was directly related to the opening of the shelter, though the Westbank Library noted that the number of security incidents at the library has decreased since the shelter opened.
- Appreciation for Paladin security in Westbank Centre was a common comment, most generally feel that it has helped the Westbank Centre area, though many feel it is not enough and would like 24/7 patrols.
- General sentiment is that the homeless shelter should be relocated to a better site, with multiple speakers raising concern about the location being near seniors and children.
- Many feel the homeless are immune from the existing laws and want the RCMP to have stronger enforcement.
- Multiple speakers raised concern on the amount of tax dollars spent addressing the resulting vagrancy and crime.
- The businesses in Westbank Centre feel they are being negatively impacted by the resulting vagrancy and crime associated with the social issues facing those that are living rough.
- Many felt that the users of the shelter should be required to give back to the community through work programs such as garbage pickup, snow removal etc.

- Many of the social service providers suggest that if residents and business owners engaged with the homeless, they may see things differently. Overall there was a request for compassion from the public towards persons who live rough.
- Service providers who spoke are excited to see the collaborative efforts to help solve the social challenges.
- The overall feeling by those that attended was that more needs to be done.
- Many felt that the local government should put more pressure on the province and federal government to help solve the issue of homelessness, drug addiction and mental health.
- The users of the shelter are thankful that they have a place to go.

COUNCIL REPORT / RESOLUTION HISTORY:

Date	Report Topic/Resolution	Resolution No.
June 18, 2019	<p>THAT Council direct staff to arrange a Town Hall meeting to provide West Kelowna residents and business owners the opportunity to share concerns or possible solutions related to crime, vagrancy, open drug use and other unsavoury behaviour where there is a negative impact on the downtown core and surrounding neighbourhoods; and</p> <p>THAT Council direct staff to hire a facilitator for the Town Hall meeting; and</p> <p>THAT Council limit its role at this meeting to listening and only seek clarification through the facilitator; and</p> <p>THAT Council limit speaking time to no more than two minutes per person, except for invited speakers; and</p> <p>THAT Council direct the Town Hall meeting take place at the Westbank Lions Community Centre on Thursday, June 27, 2019 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.; and</p> <p>THAT Council direct staff to provide a report outlining the comments and suggestions received at the town hall meeting for consideration at a future Council meeting.</p>	Committee of the Whole Mtg -no minutes available yet.
June 25, 2019	Housing, Health and Social Initiatives Update Information Report presented.	N/A

As outlined in detail in the June 25, 2019 Housing, Health and Social Initiatives Update report to Council, the cause of the rise in social issues in West Kelowna is multi-faceted and extremely complex. In 2019, the City has taken a collaborative leadership approach to addressing the social issues on the Greater Westside. The Strategies for Community Wellbeing document highlights the five key focus areas identified for 2019. This strategy builds off the successes to date, including:

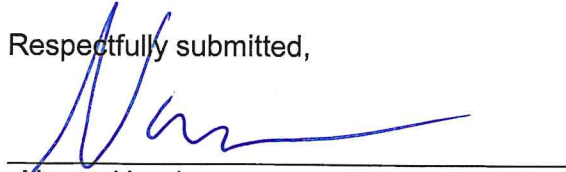
- the strong relationships being built with the community and stakeholders (ex. the Greater Westside HUB and the Affordable Housing Roundtable),
- the establishment of a security and bylaw presence in Westbank Centre,
- the increasing services on the Westside such as the creation of a provincial Community Integration Specialist staff position, and
- conveying the needs of the community to BC Housing and Interior Health.

Next Steps:

1. To ensure the feedback received at the Town Hall is considered as part of the 2020–2022 Strategic Priorities and budget considerations.
2. To continue to implement the Strategies for Community Wellbeing 2019.

3. To coordinate a community open house to further engage the public and provide information regarding the community wellbeing initiatives underway and offered by a variety of agencies and organizations on the Greater Westside.
4. In collaboration with Interior Health, co-ordinate a seniors engagement to obtain feedback on housing and health care.

Respectfully submitted,

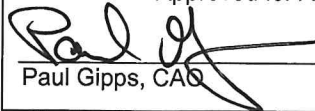


Nancy Henderson
GM of Development Services

PowerPoint: Yes No

Attachments:

1. Public Comment Summary

Approved for Agenda	
	AUG, 8, 2019
Paul Gipps, CAO	Date

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June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall Public Feedback Summary:

SPEAKER COMMENTS (also available on webcast):

Speaker 1.

- Happy that the meeting is happening, thanked Mayor for coming to his store to listen; appreciates the overview provided by presenters.
- Provided concerns with crime associated with homeless; very concerned that children are watching people doing drugs.



Speaker 2.

- Has a stepson fighting drug addiction and feels that both Interior Health Authority (IHA) and RCMP won't listen and have failed both himself and his son. Feels that the RCMP give his addicted stepson a pass and did not enforce a restraining order in place.
- Doesn't like the current approach to drug addiction: he doesn't understand why there is no requirement to quit doing drugs from IHA or Welfare; feels that drug addicted people should be included under the Mental Health Act.

Speaker 3.

- Agrees somewhat with last speaker, feels there is a big difference between supporting and enabling.
- Involved in the Westside Duplicate Bridge Club and an instructor at the Recreation Programs at the Lions Hall. These programs cater to seniors to keep them engaged and active, which is crucial to their success and well being.
- Very unsettling for senior residents to be exposed to violent and unsafe environment created by homeless community.
- Feels that the security guards have helped, but It hasn't eliminated the issues.
- Concerned that tax dollars aren't going to the appropriate initiatives.

Speaker 4.

- Is involved as a consultant addressing the WFN homelessness issues. Provided an overview of her involvement with WFN homelessness and social issues and advised that these issues require a regional approach.

Speaker 5.

- Feels that adding shelters just make it more convenient for homeless to come here.
- Used Vancouver, San Francisco and Portland as examples of what not to do.
- Feels the City should focus on taxpayers and business people and law-abiding residents of this community, not the homeless. Wonders where the harm reduction measures for our environment, assets and community infrastructure are.
- Feels the homeless and drug addicts are immune to the law due to a lack of enforcement of the existing laws
- Asked Council to abandoned plans for new shelters/programs and instead create a strong enforcement strategy that will preserve Westbank and West Kelowna for tourism and business and for decent citizens. The laws are there, please enforce them.

Speaker 6.

- Previously worked next to a shelter that turned away the worst of the worst and he had to deal with the results of this, including threats, vandalism and public urination to his adjacent business.

June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall Public Feedback Summary:

Speaker 7.

- Minister at Westbank United Church. The Church has been helping this community since the beginning; serving god by serving those in need.
- Provided a letter from Rick Thorpe and the Ministry of Children and Family Development showing that homelessness in the area has been an issue since at least 2005.
- Excited to see new City Council, Province, WFN, Peachland etc. working together for new initiatives. Says we are in this together.

Speaker 8.

- Long time, second generation resident. Hurt to see the negative attitude towards the homeless. Are we brothers and sisters' keepers, do we aspire to help our neighbours?
- Appreciates seeing patrols on street, hope they have compassion while they patrol.
- We the people of Westbank can roll up our sleeves and play an important part in helping.
- Thankful for the United Church providing a caring resource
- Feels if we all take time to understand there are mental health issues and addiction, it becomes natural to want to help. It will take some work.
- Housing First seems like the best approach, with BC Housing providing funds.

Speaker 9.

- Thanked Mayor for hosting.
- Moved from Surrey, left because of crime and lack of response, now lives in Sage Creek on WFN land and loves it.
- Knows its not politically correct, but feels that you fully know who the criminals are, who the immigrants are, who the refugees are that are committing the crimes.
- Feels that RCMP cannot do their job anymore because the courts don't let them anymore. Court system is failing.
- Thinks that we need to come down on Ottawa really hard and our provincial politicians and enforce the existing laws that are already on the books.

Speaker 10.

- Has been a businessowner for 22 years, worked in mental health for years. Has had no issues until last year.
- Wants to help the homeless, but wants to provide a hand up not a hand out. Feels that rehab is needed. Suggests a ranch for healing and rehabilitation (thinks that the Bennett's offered land in the past). The ranch should be whether you want the help or not. When you have mental health or addiction, you don't know you need help.
- Need to create responsibility. Wants more police out 24/7.
- We need to change the laws; we need to do something different.

Speaker 11.

- Local businessowner. Used to have support services in Westbank Centre and thinkd the services relocated because it was too dangerous for their staff. We spend our money picking up after the homeless.
- It's more a mental health and drug addiction issue, rather than just the homeless. Feels the drug addicts come here because we hand out drugs and needles.
- You're killing the City; people need to be safe and secure in what they do. Paladin Security told him that you need RCMP on speed-dial, as they cannot do anything.
- Asks that the City spends our taxes in the right places.

June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall Public Feedback Summary:

Speaker 12.

- Biggest thing we have to be concerned with is not creating more homeless people. Affordable Housing is key, used the example of manufactured home parks.
- Lives in a mobile home park and she's fighting to keep her home. The owner of the park wants it condemned, not because the homes are not good, but the owner doesn't want to be a landlord and wants to develop.
- Study say that the people being kicked out of the parks end up staying in the community as homeless. The Cities needs to protect the manufactured home parks.

Speaker 13.

- Thanked the City for bringing the key agencies together for this event.
- Is a member of a gated community in West Kelowna, his role is to organize security.
- The past 6-8 months trespassers in neighbourhood has increased. Seniors are becoming fearful. It's a major concern in the community.
- Has contacted RCMP and spoken with Roy Morgan. He is always looking for help. No solutions to offer, but has ideas that he will discuss with RCMP and Roy Morgan.

Speaker 14.

- Pastor with Salvation Army, a mom and a neighbour. Compassion for concerns addressed tonight. Has compassion for stories heard from the people she speaks for. Understands why they are using drugs to numb the pain.
- Doesn't like that her sons has to be careful in the fields during his lunch, but she teaches them compassion for others. Example, her son saw someone living rough and her son said 'mom, that person looks like they need something to eat'.
- Suggests going out for coffee with those homeless and hear their stories.

Speaker 15.

- Thanked coordinators for the respectful way that this meeting is being held.
- Marketing Manager at Heritage Retirement Residence; residence and families have expressed concern about walking downtown.
- We work with the vulnerable and we realize we are surrounded by the vulnerable too.
- Always had open doors, however, they now feel the need to put a gate up.
- Thank you for taking the time to look at this issue seriously.

Speaker 16.

- Has been involved in homelessness for 4 years, now involved with West Kelowna Shelter Society.
- Eyes opened when he sat and listened to the people. Most of the homeless are from here, these are not strangers. This is not build it and they will come, they are from here, they went to school here, their families are here. The Shelter is here to support our residents.
- Gives accolades to the City for supporting the interim housing. It's the step from homelessness to back in the community. We should be working together to provide safe shelter as it's a human right in this community.

June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall Public Feedback Summary:

Speaker 17.

- Branch Head for the Westbank Library confirms a 66% drop in security incidence at the Westbank Library since the shelter started.
- Having a 24-hour shelter has decreased the number of people using the library for drug use, bathrooms and shelter, significant decrease in incidences.
- Staff have been successfully trained using Guide for Homelessness. Staff are attending lunches at the United Church.
- Downtown security has helped tremendously.

Speaker 18.

- Operates a small outdoor education business for the past 20 years in Westbank Centre.
- Suggests the solution is a new drug ibogaine, which can stop oxycodone addiction.
- Concerned about the introduction of pot shops, as many physicians say developing mind in a young person continues into their 20's. Friend who works in Freedom's Door says pot is a gateway drug.
- Are Pot Shops in our town going to help the issue?

Speaker 19.

- New Executive Director for the John Howard Society. Hoping to have more presence on the Westside.
- New to community, very excited to be part of it, and very proud of the community.
- Journey Home is a long-term strategy with an aggressive 5-year goal.
- Important that we have dialogue. Encourages seeking collaborative solutions, as supported people stabilize and become stronger.

Speaker 20.

- Few Concerns: Lives in the Smith Creek development. Shannon Lake and Asquith is a drag strip, would like a RCMP presence. Snow removal is a major concern. More street lights and sidewalks.

Speaker 21.

- Speaking on behalf of the landlord of Westridge Shopping Centre, which shares a back alley with the shelter.
- Before shelter, dealt with weekly issues with criminal behaviour, significant cost of security. With the introduction of Paladin Security, we saw a decrease in incidence.
- With the introduction of the Shelter, the number of incidences outside of the security hours has increased, thinks it's mostly friends of the shelter residents.
- Business security costs is a big deterrent to businesses opening. Adjacent construction companies are also dealing with significant property crime issues.

Speaker 22.

- Owner of Whisky Jack's Pub. Feels an easy way to solve the crime issues in Westbank Centre is to move the shelter.
- Feels the City has thrown out their plan to revitalize Brown Road.
- We are asked to respect to these people, but he feels they need to be held to the same level of respect that the rest of us expect of ourselves.

Speaker 23.

- Resident of the shelter. He is an alcoholic, he know he's part of the problem, but says we need still somewhere to go.

June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall Public Feedback Summary:

Speaker 24.

- Is a member of WFN and a resident of the shelter. Is very grateful to be a resident in the shelter. Before that, he lived at the bridge and only got \$600 from CPP. He was homeless due to alcohol and pills. He doesn't bother anyone, he doesn't hurt anyone but himself. Was granted GIS and is very grateful for where he is at now. Biggest addiction right now is gambling, but again, he doesn't hurt anyone but himself.

Speaker 25.

- Mom of three kids. Town Hall asked for solutions, so she offer that.
- RCMP: we are lacking in RCMP staff, we were promised 2 staff last year, we still haven't received them. Taking that into consideration, we opened a shelter.
- Shelter: Shelter shouldn't be next to a daycare and a retirement community. It should be closer to services, near the bridge.
- Security: We need to ensure security in Westbank Centre.
- Asks the community to channel your frustrations, empower yourselves and reach out to the people in charge.

Speaker 26.

- Harm reduction has to be considered in a multi-functional way. Not just the homeless, but also harm reduction for the community.
- Concerned about adding recreational marihuana users to the area.
- Concerned about needles associated with drug users in area.
- Would like to know how the shelter is being run?
- How do we manage the loitering, the criminal use, how do we empower the residence and their friends?

Speaker 27.

- Speaker say get a job, acknowledges that maybe that makes him heartless. Feels that giving free needles just enables them.
- Brother is addicted to oxycodone, but he always wants handouts that aren't helping him.
- Police can't help as their hands are tied. The drug addiction is a cancer.
- Doesn't have solutions, but something has to be done, maybe tough love.

Speaker 28.

- Works at the shelter. Grew up in Surrey, he's seen a lot more, a lot worse. His parents taught him to have compassion. It taught him to mobilize and help out. Kelowna can be a tough place to live and get along, it can be very divided.
- No one is getting free drugs, it's a misconception that needs to stop.
- Look to other communities and see their successes, but community support is key to success.

Speaker 29.

- Has owned a dental office in Westbank Centre for 12 years.
- Agree with idea that a place with support is needed, but the location is not ideal.
- Much rather see my tax dollars go somewhere that is more than just a shelter and meal. What are they supposed to do during the daytime? Money needs to be focussed into more intense programs. They need medical intervention, ways to become purposeful in the community. They aren't employable in the regular sense, so they need to be taught.
- Suggests a better location and something innovative.

June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall Public Feedback Summary:

Speaker 30.

- Works for Paladin Security. Comments are his own, do not reflect the companies position.
- Nature of security is to observe and report. Make the call, take your community back.
- Security and policing don't cure homelessness. Housing solves homelessness. The Shelter is a solution but the Shelter has to be accountable and responsible for their residence.
- When you take people off the streets and put them in a house by themselves this sets them up for failure. The interim housing is the solution, as it teaches the residence how to live again.

Speaker 31.

- Works in addiction services in Kelowna. Involved in Journey Home as the convenor for the Living Experience (part of the Journey Home consultation).
- Not one of the homeless consulted said give me a house, drugs or alcohol. They asked for respect, to look them in the eye, treat them like a human being. We need to provide choice and dignity.
- Enforcement doesn't work – the system needs to change. Harm Reduction is key and contempt prior to investigation leads to failure.

Speaker 32.

- Homeless have to be responsible for their wellbeing. If we keep giving them handouts, they're going to keep stealing from us.

Speaker 33.

- This is not our problem, it's a federal and provincial problem. The federal/provincial governments should take the mental addiction and drug problems and get them the heck out of our town.

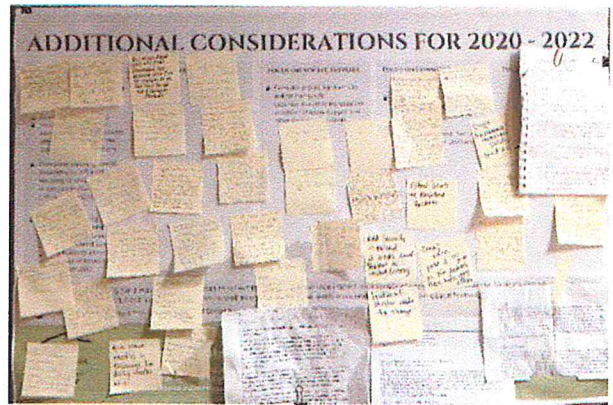
June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall Public Feedback Summary:

WRITTEN COMMENTS:

Post It Notes (exact wording):

Patrols/ Enforcement:

1. Patrol the church parking lot (across from fire station)
2. Why are homeless and drug addiction people not process(ed) as breaking the law? Police program is not working. Law enforcement means enforcement.
3. Sending people to prison just further exposes people to more sophisticated criminals and potentially increases criminality.
4. Crime increase in the Brown Road area. RCMP not able to attend to other calls.
5. Lack of RCMP
6. Add security to extend two blocks around shelter to control loitering
7. Extend patrols to neighbour business.
8. Great idea past 6:00pm, as the patrols have been very effective.



Shelter Location:

9. Moving the location away from a transit accessible location will not work
10. Move the current shelter away from seniors, daycare, downtown core, bars etc.
11. Please respect homeless people by not housing them in areas of high population where they are potentially stared at. They need help and an area to feel safe and comfortable.
12. The fellows from the shelter said it best. They are grateful for help, but in that location they don't know what direction to not walk from leaving the shelter. Children are one way, seniors the other.
13. We support the cause, but the location is wrong
14. Most services are in Kelowna, location is too isolating
15. Location of Shelter needs to change
16. Has anyone asked the residents of the shelter if they think they should be by a daycare, seniors' home, businesses and bars. Feeling "on display".
17. Good intentions, they need help. Next to daycare, retirement home and beer store is stupid.

Other Jurisdiction Solutions:

18. Recommend you inquire with City of Nanaimo as to how they solve their homeless
19. Seattle is Dying notes (see attached typed comments)
20. Google: Amsterdam Homeless Solution. Spend 5 minutes.

General:

21. Whenever someone continuously receives charity, they lose their self respect and hate the one who took it from them
22. Our street is so dark, we need more street lights – Shannon Lake
23. What part of the shelter helps the homeless other than an attraction to free night out of the cold? If they get free shelter, then make them work, street clean up, clean parks and boulevards. There are many jobs available.
24. Social workers accompanying police, ensuring people are connected to resources, provide mental health support

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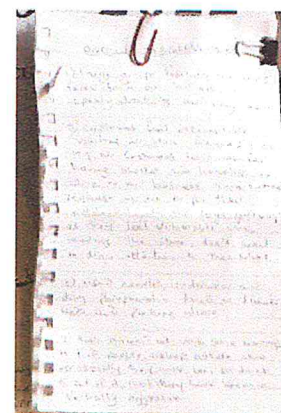
25. Can we use the large lot to have community gardens serviced by the housing residents? Snow removal on the sidewalks in winter.
26. It's important that we don't conflate homelessness with crime. Some homeless people may commit crimes, but our crime problem is not just because of homeless people.
27. Multi-level Facility: shelter, transitional housing appts, workers assisting people to find market housing
28. Give Clean needles in exchange for dirty needles only
29. Agree with the "on the scene" comment that – Drug addiction programs are 'not working'. Stop assisting them to continue use, they should be forced into treatment plan. Stop giving taxpayers handout to allow them to purchase drugs.
30. Anyone staying at shelter works picking garbage, yard work, whatever. After working all day, they then get a meal and a bed.
31. This meeting is a failure. The homeless lobby is here preaching at us. But this should be a citizen driven meeting, the point is "what do we do about the shelter – close or stay".
32. More Housing First. More harm reduction supports. More compassion, less stigma
33. On behalf of the GWBOT members, most especially, those members who are located in the downtown Westbank, we encourage both municipal governments to ask both provincial and federal governments for the resources required to resolve the multi-faceted issues that need to be addressed. Long term solutions and strategic plans must be established ASAP to maintain the economic sustainability of the Greater Westside. As we all know, a healthy local economy equals a healthy community. Keep westside businesses safe, secure and open for business, so customers continue to walk through the door.
34. Every homeless person in our community needs to register then show up every morning to get sent to a job at: the dump, parks, picking up cigarette butts, recycling depot, washing CWK work vehicles, etc. The City of West Kelowna could run this program. If they can't help upkeep this community, then send them on their way. No more handouts.
35. There are many vacant commercial properties on WFN land. Why can they not be talked into homes for the WFN homeless/addicted?
36. The problem is not the homeless. The problem is attracting transient people to our community who commit crime and scare seniors and the young.

Other Written Submissions:

- 3 typed comments attached at end of this summary.
- 1 Handwritten Note – text provided below:

Ongoing Homeless Issues – June 2019

- 1) *Large groups hanging out across road from our business, all day, openly drinking and drug dealing.*
- 2) *Customers feel uncomfortable visiting our store. Frequently asked by our customers how we feel having shelter and homeless so close to our business. Some customers request us not to put their purchases into our logo giftbags as they feel vulnerable when leaving the store, they don't want to draw attention to themselves.*
- 3) *Used needles, underwear and drug paraphernalia found in flower beds and parking alcove.*
- 4) *Have arrived at work some mornings to find people asleep outside store, occasionally they have been so drunk or out of it that they have become verbally aggressive.*



June 27, 2019 Social Issues Town Hall Public Feedback Summary:

- 5) *Drunk or high on drugs people come into store asking to use our phone and toilet. Sometimes they ask unrealistic questions about our jewellery and waste staffs time and make everyone in the store feel on edge.*
- 6) *Garbage left behind when they are hanging out across the road.*
- 7) *Noticeably less foot traffic on Main Street since homeless shelter opened.*
- 8) *Blue transit van – suspect drug dealing?*
- 9) *Wide spread general public conception that downtown West Kelowna is not safe.*
- 10) *Pot Shop, quality greens building and cattle country – really??!!!*

Other Submissions

A copy of a 2005 letter, was provided by the Westbank United Church, from the Ministry of Children and Family Development acknowledging the issues associated with homelessness and community safety in the Westbank Centre area stems back to at least 2005.